

Summer VetFest Social Media Toolkit

Overview

VA is hosting a nationwide *Summer VetFest* throughout the month of July to spread the word about the [PACT Act](#). During the month, local VA facilities will host more than 50 events across the nation — at least one in every state — to inform Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply for the health care and benefits they have earned. Many of these events will feature food and music, as well as VA staff who are ready to help Veterans apply or submit an intent to file, get screened for toxic exposures, or even apply to come work at VA.

We at VA are particularly focused on getting Veterans and survivors to apply for PACT Act benefits on or before August 9th. While there is no deadline to apply for PACT Act-related benefits, there is urgency. That's because most Veterans and survivors who [apply](#) for benefits or submit an "[Intent to File](#)" by August 9, if granted, will have their benefits backdated to August 10th of last year – the day that President Biden signed the PACT Act into law.

This social media toolkit includes draft posts, key resources, and FAQs to help you spread the word about Summer VetFest and the PACT Act. We also hope to see you at your local [Summer VetFest event](#) this month. Thank you, as always, for your partnership and all of your support.

Draft Social Media Copy

Summer VetFest Messaging (general):

1. Calling all Veterans and survivors! Join me on [DATE] at [LOCATION] for #SummerVetFest, a gathering where Veterans and their families can meet local VA professionals and apply for benefits.

Stop by, meet other Veterans, and learn more about the benefits you earned! [\[LINK TO BLOG/USE CUSTOM INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)

2. Last year, a new law expanded VA care and benefits to millions of Veterans who were exposed to burn pits and other hazards during their deployment.

To learn how you can access these new benefits, join me at [LOCATION] on [DATE]. #SummerVetFest [\[LINK TO BLOG/USE CUSTOM INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)

3. Got questions about the PACT Act? Stop by [LOCATION] on [DATE] to meet other Veterans and learn more about how this historic legislation can help you and your family. #SummerVetFest [\[LINK TO BLOG/USE CUSTOM INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)

4. Were you exposed to burn pits or Agent Orange while serving our country? You may be one of millions of Vets who are now eligible for care and benefits at VA.

Stop by [LOCATION] on [DATE] to meet other Veterans and learn more. #SummerVetFest [\[LINK TO BLOG TO COME/OR LOCAL INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)

General PACT Act messaging:

1. Were you exposed to toxins, burn pits, or Agent Orange during your service?

You may be eligible for new benefits. To learn more, visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MYVA411. Don't wait, get what you earned and apply today.

2. A new law just expanded health care and benefits for millions of Veterans and their survivors.

Want to learn more about what this could mean for you and your family? Visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MYVA411. Don't wait, get what you earned and apply today. [\[INCLUDE VIDEO FROM THE LIST BELOW\]](#)

3. Did you or a loved one serve in the military during [VIETNAM WAR/GULF WAR/AFTER 9/11]?

You may be eligible for new health care and benefits. Don't wait, apply today by visiting [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) or calling 1-800-MYVA411. [\[INCLUDE ERA-SPECIFIC VIDEO FROM THE LIST BELOW\]](#)

“Apply by August 9” Messaging:

1. Calling all Veterans and survivors! If you apply for PACT Act benefits by August 9, your benefits may be backdated to August 10, 2022. Don't wait, apply today by visiting [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) or calling 1-800-MYVA411.
2. Did you know that if you apply for the new VA benefits by August 9, your benefit payments could be backdated to August 2022?

Visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) or join us for the #SummerVetFest to learn more! [\[LINK TO BLOG/USE CUSTOM INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)

Key Resources and Fact sheets

- [Blog: Where to Find a VetFest Event Near You](#)
- [Blog: How to Spread the Word about the PACT Act](#) (includes nearly 20 fact sheets in 10+ languages)
- [Downloadable PSA 1](#)
- [Downloadable PSA 2](#)
- Additional Videos:
 - [VA Disability Claims for Burn Pits, Agent Orange, and More](#)
 - [How PACT Act affects Vietnam Veterans](#)
 - [5 Ways the PACT Act Helps Veterans](#)
 - [How PACT Act affects Gulf War & Iraq Veterans](#)
 - [How PACT Act affects Post 9/11 Veterans](#)
 - [Be Vigilant of PACT Act Scammers](#)

[Infographic](#)



SUMMER VETFEST
July & August 2023

Join your fellow Veterans and family members at a VA facility near you to learn more about new VA benefits and services that may be available to you.

#SummerVetFest

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The infographic features a dark blue background with the title 'SUMMER VETFEST' in large white and light blue letters. Below the title, the dates 'July & August 2023' are displayed. A central hexagonal grid contains portraits of seven diverse veterans. The largest portrait in the center is of a man wearing a black 'GULF WAR VETERAN' cap and a black t-shirt with a 'RANGER' patch. Other smaller portraits show a woman with blonde hair, a man with glasses, and several other men in various military-style clothing. At the bottom, there is a call to action, a hashtag, and the VA logo with the text 'U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs'.

[FAQ](#)

Why do Veterans have to apply for benefits by August 9?

There is no deadline to apply for PACT Act benefits, but there is urgency: If you apply for PACT Act-related benefits before by August 9, your benefits may be backdated to August 10, 2022 – the day the bill was signed into law. And if you're not ready to submit a full claim by then, don't worry – you can also submit a quick-and-easy "intent to file" by August 9 and still receive the same effective date. Visit VA.gov/PACT to apply today.

How can Veterans know if they have been exposed to toxins?

All Veterans enrolled in VA care can now get a quick, easy toxic exposure screening at VA. The screening takes 5-10 minutes and begins by asking Veterans if they believe they experienced any toxic exposures while serving in the armed forces. Veterans who report concerns about toxic exposures will then be connected to information about clinical resources and benefits.

Who qualifies for the new benefits under PACT Act?

If you served overseas since 1955, there's a good chance you're eligible for benefits under the PACT Act. The expansion of health care and benefits will affect millions of Vietnam-era, Gulf War-era, and Post-9/11 Veterans who served overseas and their survivors. To know more about who qualifies, visit VA.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411.

What is a presumptive? How does it affect my claim?

Thanks to the PACT Act, VA is now able to “presumptively” provide benefits to Veterans who live with *hundreds* of toxic-exposure related conditions – including many cancers and illnesses. This means that when [eligible](#) Veterans apply for benefits, they do not need to prove that their service caused their condition; instead, VA automatically assumes service-connection for these Veterans and provides benefits accordingly.

Can survivors also apply for benefits?

Yes! If you’re the survivor of a Veteran who died from one of the many conditions outlined in the PACT Act, including cancers and other illnesses, you may be eligible for VA care and benefits. We encourage you to apply now if you think you might be eligible. Visit VA.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more and apply today.

Do I need to hire a lawyer to file a claim?

There are people out there who will try to convince you that you need to pay someone or use a lawyer to apply for VA benefits – but that’s not true. Applying for PACT Act benefits is free, it’s easy, and you can do it by working directly with VA or a Veteran Service Organization.

Will my compensation be affected if I file a new claim related to burn pits?

Some Veterans are worried that applying for PACT Act benefits will impact their current benefits – but the truth is this: if you file a claim, you are 32 times more likely to see your benefits increase or stay the same than decrease. So don’t worry and don’t wait – apply today.